(c) the steps taken by the Government to contain the prices of books;

(d) whether some States have demanded subsidy in this regard; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b). There has been increase in the prices of books due to increase in the price of paper, printing charges and other costs.

(c) In pursuance of the resolve expressed in the National Policy on Education 1986 to make available quality books at low prices, several measures are continuing at Government level. The Central Government initiative for school students of classes I - XII is implemented through the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The pricing of NCERT text books is done on a no-profit no- loss basis. The Council does not price its text books for classes I - VII beyond Rs. 15/- and absorbs the losses, if any. The National Book Trust operates a scheme of subsidised publication of university level text/reference books and technical books of diploma level. The University Grants Commission also provides development grants to universities and colleges, inter-alia for purchase of books by the institutions.

Till 31st March, 1990, the Central Government supplied white printing paper at subsidised rates to States/Union Territories for the production of school text books and exercise books to make them available to the students at reasonable prices.

(d) and (e). Some States have requested for the revival of the scheme for subsidised supply of white printing paper. The matter is under consideration of Government.

Mining in Forest Areas

*474. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for according clearance to mining in forests areas;

(b) whether the permission for obtaining clearance for mining in forest areas has become difficult; and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to simplify the procedure for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c). The proposals for diversion of forest land for mining are required to be sent to the Central Government in the prescribed proformay alongwith relevant information. After all the essential information is received from the State/Union Territory Governments, the proposals are examined and decided on merits expeditiously. Detailed Guidelines have been issued in this regard. Now, it has been decided to modify the Guidelines to furthers streamline the examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act.

[*Translation*]

Plantation of Red Oil Palm

*478. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA:
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imposed a ban on plantation of red oil palm in

Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the total loss of foreign exchange as a result thereof; and

(d) whether it is proposed to revive the plantation of red oil palm by removing endemic forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b). In pursuance of the decision taken in the meeting of the Island Development Authority held on 27 12-1986 there is a moratorium on expansion of Red Oil Plan Plantation in A&N Islands until a detailed environmental impact assessment is completed and all aspects have been examined on an integrated basis. Also as per provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 diversion of forest land for raising Red Oil Palm is prohibited except with the prior approval of the Central Government.

(c) There is no loss of foreign exchange involved as the production from existing plantation has not been stopped.

(d) No, Sir, One of the Basic objectives of the National Forest Policy is to conserve the natural heritage of the country by preserving the remaining natural forests with the vast variety of flora and fauna, which represents the remarkable biological diversity and genetic resources of the country. The policy also provides that such natural forests which also help to maintain ecological balance will not be made available to industries for undertaking plantations and for any other activities.

Health Scheme for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes in Uttar Pradesh

*479. SHRI GAYA PRASAD KORI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Health and Family Welfare Schemes/Programmes implemented for Scheduled Tribes in Uttar Pradesh during each of the last three years;

(b) the targets fixed for this purpose during the said period and the achievements made; and

(c) the amount proposed to be allocated for this purpose in the Eight Plan and the targets fixed in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): (a) to (c). Information is being collected from the Government of Uttar Pradesh and will be laid on the table of the House.

[*English*]

Import of Locomotives

*480. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI:
SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any plan to purchase electric locomotives from the Asea Brown Boverri of Sweden;

(b) whether the purchase contract has been finalised;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the criteria adopted in awarding the contract;

(d) whether the Chittaranjan Locomo-